123 I was seeking through every means to convince them that they would find dedicated friends among us, when they replied that Teiu Burubê had told them H. M. the Emperor was a friend of the Mundurucu.

● 159 Teiu Burubê was a Mundurucu who had left the villages many years previously, and returned after a long absence. He presented himself in the maloca of Cabrod elegantly dressed after our fashion. His kinsmen greeted him with delight.

Then he told them that he had been baptized in Rio de Janeiro, that he had taken the name of Martinho de Alcantara, and that H. M. the Emperor had served as his godfather and patron. He found in the maloca of Cabroá various relatives, and in particular a sister who treated him with great devotion. When he had left his native village, at a very young age, he had been accompanied by a brother, and together they had traveled down the Canumá River.

This Mundurucu painted a vivid image of the advantages of civilized life, without moving his kinsmen to renounce their savage existence.

Eventually the change in his way of life made him ill, and he came down with violent fevers.

It was said in the maloca that his elegant clothes had cast an evil spell upon him, so his sister angrily gathered them on the village grounds and set them ablaze.

As he recovered from his illness he met even greater distress, for now he was naked.

He finally died; his sister, who had not forsaken him for an instant, buried him under her own hammock. [100]

XII

Population of the central Mundurucu malocas.

161 361 It is very difficult, indeed impossible, to furnish an exact census of these Indians, living as they do in malocas situated in inaccessible stretches of bush country.

12; Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
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all Mundurucú still believe firmly in the supernatural causation of illness. Thus, the drugs of the white man are considered efficacious in the repair of the damage caused by the sorcerer's evil objects, but this in no way circumvents the necessity for the shaman to extract them. A corollary of the continued belief in native explanations of disease is the persistence of accusations of sorcery and the occasional killing of witches.

The only shaman in recent practice in Missão Velha was executed as a sorcerer in 1950. It is now necessary to call a shaman from another village or to bring the sick person to him. The lack of an actively practicing shaman has not prevented another case of sorcery from arising in the village, for the accused in this instance was a shaman by descent. The case will be described in some detail, for it illustrates how political factionalism, sorcery, and general disaffection have combined as fission elements in the loosely integrated Cururú River villages.

Several months before we stayed in Missão Velha, a great deal of illness caused the chief's son-in-law and sons to seek the services of Pedro, the most renowned of all Mundurucú shamans and a resident of the mission. Pedro, without the knowledge of the priests, of course, went to Missão Velha and performed the necessary acts to destroy all evil objects in the vicinity of the village. He then informed the others that the man responsible was one Antonio, a resident of Missão Velha whose father was a shaman, although he himself never practiced. The chief wanted no trouble and planned for a time to move away from the supposedly malignant Antonio, but the younger men of his family were determined to kill the sorcerer. Certain other men of the village, however, were not fully convinced of Antonio's guilt and opposed his condemnation. Their doubts were not a reflection of skepticism in

12: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
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supernatural belief, but arose from hostility to the chief's group, Antonio's most persistent persecutors. The fact that they would also doubt the accuracy and integrity of the most powerful shaman in the tribe is indicative of the intensity of this animosity. Some of the men opposed to the execution felt, on the other hand, that Antonio was in all probability guilty, but expressed revulsion at the idea of more bloodshed and would have rather preferred to let him depart in peace. In any event, no unanimous community action could be taken.

The split in the village was exactly along the lines of the two village political factions. Favoring the execution of Antonio were the chief, his two sons, his two sons-in-law, and the brother and brother-in-law of one son-in-law. The opposition consisted of the brother-in-law and former co-resident of a shaman killed at Missão Velha two years earlier, the brother-in-law and house mate of the accused Antonio, and a household whose men were related affinally to the chief's group. The position of the latter house in the dispute is of particular interest, for it included the brother-in-law, brother, and nephew of that son-in-law of the chief who was the moving spirit of the other faction. The people of this household had originally moved to Missão Velha to be near the latter kinsman.

The dilemma was finally resolved when the frightened Antonio decided to move completely out of the Mundurucú country to the relative safety of the Tapajós River. Those who defended him, however, were completely alienated from the village, and all had made plans to move. The man whose brother-in-law was killed two years ago was ready to settle permanently near his rubber avenue, the brother-in-law of the accused contemplated his departure, and the members of the third household wanted to move farther upstream. We left Missão Velha before the shifts

12:Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
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occurred. If all the planned moves took place, however, the net loss to the village would be 36 out of 90 people, the residents of three of the ten occupied houses. As a footnote to this episode, Antonio fled shortly after our departure, but he made the fatal error of settling in a Mundurucú hamlet on the lower Cururú River. His reputation was, of course, widely known, and he was slain by his new fellow-villagers. [683]

To our knowledge the dispute never flared into an open display of aggression. On a few occasions the accused man was seen to talk to one of the men who wished to kill him and, more rarely, there was mutual visiting. Hostility between Mundurucú is generally more open on the Cururú than in the savannahs, but violence is still suppressed. Here, too, the only escape valve consists in killing suspected sorcerers; otherwise, one may move away from the object of hostility. The latter is easily done in the socio-economic framework of the Cururú settlements, for interpersonal and interfamilial dependence is low, and individuals have correspondingly greater mobility than on the savannahs.

Although no personal violence attends these disputes, the facts of conflict and withdrawal are socially disruptive beyond their effects on village membership. In the above-described conflict, two brothers were ranged in opposite factions, because one had chosen to follow the stand in defense of the accused taken by the oldest member of his household. And the position of the latter placed him in conflict with one of his wife's brothers, who favored killing Antonio. An even more interesting split occurred in a household whose inhabitants were absent from the village during my research. The oldest man and head of the house wished to avoid strife by taking no action against the condemned man, but his son, who resided with the father, was

12:Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
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159 578 754 756 a leader in the movement for execution. Although many of these bonds were probably not permanently fractured by the dispute, they were all certainly placed under strain. The fact that first-degree kinsmen, not to mention clan fellows, can become embroiled in internecine strife that can result in the withdrawal of one of the parties is indicative of the progressive weakening of kin bonds. The ethic of harmony and nonviolence that was associated with the traditional institutions of descent and residence continues to some extent on the Cururú River, but it does not prevent social disruption.

184 571 [592] Another noteworthy contrast between Missão Velha and the savannah villages is the lower level of social interaction in the former. It has been pointed out that the household, most often a nuclear family, is the basic economic unit of the Cururú River Mundurucú. The same applies to everyday social intercourse, for not only are the men's house and the all-village collective female labor of the savannah farinha shed absent, but visiting between houses is also less frequent. After the day's labors, the husband, wife, and children usually sit around their own fire to eat and talk, and afterward retire to their hammocks. Occasionally a [574] neighbor and his family will visit briefly. Visiting is almost always done in groups with two or three families coming together at one time. The all-male or all-female gatherings of the savannahs which have for their respective nuclei the men's house and the farinha shed are absent.

DISINTEGRATION OF THE CURURÚ VILLAGES

182 578 The conflict over sorcery in Missão Velha is typical of the schisms constantly arising in the Cururú villages and which account, in part, for the fact that the average village population is on the decline with a corresponding increase in the number of villages. In addition, many people are